

General Education Council

Minutes

9/24/09

Call to order: 12:35

Present:

Members: Kathy Malanga (co-chair), Jean Levitan (co-chair), Lorra Brown, Kathy Silgailis, John Peterman, Rob McCallum, Nancy Weiner, Frank Pavese. Balmuri Natrajan, Alejandro Anreus, Giuliana Andreopoulos, Christine Kelly, George Robb, Sandra DeYoung, Viji Sargis

Visitors: Sue Godar, Wartyna Davis, Joanne Lee

The agenda was approved without correction (Peter Griswold moved; Frank Pavese seconded).

The minutes from 9/3/09 were approved without correction (Nancy Weiner moved; Balmurli Natrajan seconded)

The minutes from 9/10/09 were approved without correction (Nancy Weiner moved)

Co-Chairs Report

Jean Levitan noted that the faculty will likely approach the GE council with questions and may also address them to individual members of the GE Council. As an example, she noted Professor Linda Kaufman's concerns about the status of technology in the GE proposals. Department chairs have been asked to put the GE proposals on the agenda for department meetings.

Senate Chair's Report

Sue Godar reported that the Senate Executive Committee has decided how to bring the GE proposals to the Senate floor for discussion. She will prepare a summary of the commonalities between the USP and the Alternative Proposal and share it with the GE Council for feedback. At the Senate meeting on 10/13, the commonalities between the USP and the Alternative Proposal will be presented for discussion and voting by the Senate.

Christine Kelly and Wartyna Davis questioned the purpose and advantages of this plan

Sue Godar noted that the Senate was not seeing the differences between the plan and this was a strategy to get the commonalities off the table.

Sandra DeYoung asked what the Senate would be asked to vote on: the skills, the credits numbers, etc.. She added that she didn't think the plan would work because faculty in her department would want to see the entire plan before voting.

Frank Pavese noted that Senate Representatives do see the two plans as different.

Christine Kelly suggested that the commonalities could be taken off the table but not voted on.

Sue Godar stated that the goal is to bring one proposal to the Senate floor that the Senate can approve with amendments.

Giuliana Andreopoulos suggested that the GE Council provide the Senate with a table comparing the two proposals.

Joanne Lee asked if the GE Council can make changes in the two proposals

Jean Levitan noted that the GE Council has scheduled two forums for input – 9/29 and 10/8.

Sue Godar replied that since the proposals are on the Senate floor, no drastic changes could be accepted, but smaller changes could be accepted up until 10/6.

Balmurli Batrajan asked if the forums could be structured so as to provide the audiences with an explanation of the two proposals, with emphasis on the Alternative Proposal, since it is new. He also asked if the Senate could refuse to vote on either proposal.

Sue Godar re-emphasized that the Senate would be asked to vote on the commonalities and that one model would be expected to be presented to the Senate for amending and voting. She noted that there is extreme concern about the implementation, particularly the establishment of committees of experts to review proposals to determine if SLO are acceptable. The Senate Executive Council had thought that the GE Council as a whole would do the approving. There are Senate meetings scheduled for 10/13 (Science 2064 – re-named from Science 2B) and 10/27. The implementation plan will not be discussed until the 10/13 meeting.

Sandra DeYoung noted that reviewing every proposed course would be an overwhelming task for the GE Council.

Kathy Silgailis asked what would happen if the Senate did not like either plan.

Sue Godar noted that it would be a forced choice. The Senate could vote the proposal down at the end of the process, but at that point the Provost would impose a program. It is the administration's position that the new president should not begin with an unfinished GE proposal.

Rob McCallum noted that several colleagues are developing alternative plans.

Sue Godar responded that the Senate would only consider curriculum plans that had been vetted by a Council, but amendments could be added from the floor.

Structure of Forums

Frank Pavese suggested re-naming the proposals.

Vis-à-vis discussion on how much time would be allotted for a subcommittee member to present each their proposals, John Peterman suggested that the Alternative Model have 30 minutes to present and the USP model have 20 minutes, under the rationale that faculty had not had as much exposure to the Alternative Model.

Christine Kelly noted that it would be helpful to have more information on the revisions to the USP.

Rob McCallum recommended that discussion not be held until both proposals had been presented.

Christine Kelly recommended that there be some time for questions after each proposal.

It was moved by Rob McCallum and seconded by Alex Anreus that the USP have 15 minutes and the Alternative Model have 25 minutes for presentation. The motion passed.

Additional discussion about the structure of the forums was as follows:

- Lorra Brown suggested that questions be taken by college
- Christine Kelly suggested that one person serve as a chronicler of the sequence of hands raised and that there be a variety of people to answer questions, like a panel.
- Kathy Silgailis suggested that people line up to ask questions, that there be a time limit and that only one follow-up question be allowed
- Kathy Malanga suggested that the GE Council could sit in front of the room
- John Peterman voiced concerns about having a table of GE Council members
- Sue Godar suggested that the nature of the question be clarified after each question and recommended that faculty with concerns about the GE proposals should speak to their Senate Representative to make their feelings known.
- George Robb suggested no one should be allowed to ask a second question until everyone in the audience had a chance to ask a first question.

Implementation Proposal

The remainder of the meeting focused on the implementation proposal. Kathy Malanga Sandy DeYoung reviewed the implementation proposals for each model and drafted the implementation plan.

Jean Levitan noted the course approval is the under the purview of the council and a decision as to how the subcommittees would be established would need to be made. This would be predicated on the Council's position that we would reach out and establish subcommittees.

Sandy DeYoung noted that the workload would be an issue if left to the current number of Council members, where only one section of a college is represented.

Christine Kelly noted that there were philosophical concerns and efficiency concerns about the approval process and assuring faculty members that they are part of the process is important since we require buy-in and work of faculty outside of the Council to have a new model in place.

Sue Godar noted that either a course outline has them or they don't have them.

Sandy DeYoung also noted that new course proposals usually are affiliated with a faculty members who will be teaching a particular course. Is the person qualified?

Kathy Malanga suggested that we need experts to establish criteria for courses and noted that the GE Council reviews courses all the time based upon a set of criteria.

Sue Godar said there should be a process to set up criteria to review courses and the implementation plan to review criteria.

Rob McCallum noted that he, along with Jean and John, served on the GE Committee during the last revision and that subcommittees reviewed courses which were then approved by the committee.

Frank Pavese asked who was going to be deciding what courses would be approved? This was a major issue when the USP Proposal was put forth in the spring.

Sandy DeYoung wanted to know if the Undergraduate Council have a role. The response was no since they do not approve courses.

John Peterman said a process of cooperation is needed between subcommittees and departments and faculty who know the area.

George Robb noted some faculty may experience anxiety about the process, worried that people who don't know anything about their field would be approving the courses.

Murli Natrajan noted that the student learning outcomes were very complex and we may need experts to assist with course approval.

Christine Kelly would be opposed to the GE Council appointing people to serve on the subcommittees.

George Robb requested that substantive issues not be discussed in email and should be done in person.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50pm

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Griswold